altered that environment to its own uses. I hope that this will result in a broader and a deeper understanding of the manner in which an old culture, subject to frequent changes, with a long history of settlement, has, through its social organization, used and is using its chief resources, the cultivated land, the fish in the seas, the deep stones imbedded in its earth, its forests, and its waters. 121 311

There were certain obstacles in carrying out this plan. As everyone knows who has attempted such tasks, after the first few days the apparent simplicities of village life vanish before one's eyes, and he is left with a mass of observations whose ramifications lead in every direction. There is simply no limit to the courses of inquiry which these "simple" villages open up. 121

There was the problem of distinguishing between what was customary and carried on for this reason and what was of basic living importance in the culture. This difficulty disappears for those who believe that every trait has some significance if it has survived, but this neglects the point that many beliefs and customs belong to segments of a population. To one group what may be done as a matter of form may be of close personal importance to another. Both points are significant, for to do what one is expected to do, even if a pure form, is in itself a fact of importance. This applies especially to religious observances and anniversaries in honor of the dead. In some cases, they seemed perfunctorily performed, particularly among the young and the better educated. The survival of certain beliefs is due to their preservation by segments of the population, and women seem to be the chief carriers of the devotional and religious tradition. Real differences, too, seem to lie in age groups, with the dividing line at about fifty-five to sixty years. Many under this age have little understanding of the history or traditional culture. The old, and particularly the old women, have carried on. 121 183 184 [560] [561]

Observation in itself is deceptive. Even the grasses, shrubs, and pine trees on the hillsides seem to be a more or less permanent part of the natural environment. Yet these were greatly changed during the war and in local areas grasses have succeeded to places formerly occupied by the pines. 121

The information was obtained in the following manner. (1) Personal conversations in the Japanese language with residents of the villages. Much of the information was secured by accompanying people to their work, attending their parties, visiting shops, rice and sugar mills, and asking questions about the things seen. (2) Direct personal observation, supplemented by conversations to check the accuracy and the significance of these observations. (3) Information gathered from village land records, statistics, land maps, and family registers. Later there was considerable difficulty in securing comparability in the statistics. For this reason the attempt to present quantitative data was in some cases abandoned in favor of a general qualitative description. (4) General discussions with the personnel of the Civil Affairs Administration and with Okinawans. (5) Personal impressions, but these have been included only when they are based on repeated observation. (6) In the historical and general 12 129

need of succession is met, birth control measures might be accepted. There is, it is true, a widespread feeling that many children are a happiness which artificial control should not destroy. But this feeling, especially true with women, is often lost after the fourth or fifth child when mothers may dread further child bearing.[7]

In the villages studied, there is an awareness of birth control. This awareness comes from conversation and reading, the primary sources being Japanese magazines and newspapers. I did not meet anyone who admitted practicing birth control or who desired to do so. According to the informants, it is not practiced at all. There may be some instances.

But birth control methods are not widely understood, and even if they were, it is doubtful that people would use them on their own initiative. The present apathy toward birth control methods may be due to the fact that only recently has the question been of any significance. In the past economic difficulties within a family were relieved by emigration. There was thus little need to think of a limited family. On the contrary, there was pride in a family that might spread over continents.

Historically, the whole emphasis in the family system has been on a large or a medium sized, not a limited, family, and this, even today, is tied in with family pride coming from having children and grandchildren. If families have girls to begin with, the feeling is all the stronger. Though unusual, it is not unheard of to have a family of girls, and even if there are sons, there should be enough of them to take care of the hazards of death.

5

Conclusion

Among some villagers—and this seems to be independent of the degree of education—there are now more realistic appraisals of what the soil and the land can make available to a growing population and to their own children. Emigration for the time being is not possible. And, even if it were on a broad scale, it would not only have to skim off the present excess population, but take continuing care of future natural increases as well.

There were in all the villages several considerations that have influenced these appraisals. Land is insufficient, even in quantity, though in local areas such as Matsuda, it might suffice for local demands. The arable land is also poor. The poor and insufficient land,

[TEXT Continues TOP of P. 69--Analyst]

7 This dread of continual child bearing is discussed as an attitude, not as a general truth. The statement is based on conversations with men and women in each of the villages. Many women in Okinawa would not agree with this, but the attitude, I am convinced, if not a prevailing one, is at least frequent enough to be worth recording as something more than individual distaste.

349 Co-operation often takes the form of a division of labor. In
476 building an elaborate permanent house with cement foundations, siding,
463 plank flooring and a tile roof, greater skills than the handyman techniques of a smaller house are required. In the building of a house, men with special skills, such as a carpenter, a cement mixer, a stonecutter, or a mason participate; others bring lumber and wood from the mountains, as in Matsuda, or lay the grass on the tile roof. In some [464] cases, all the labor may be donated; in others, the carpenter, the cement mixer, the stonecutter may be hired, with helper's work done by volunteers. In simpler construction, the carpentry may be done by anyone who has this secondary skill but is primarily a farmer or a fisherman. People who have those skills are said to have half and half occupations (hannohangyō in Japanese).

7

Housebuilding Ceremonies

342 In building, a distinction is made between a temporary and a permanent house. A temporary house may be built following a typhoon or a fire, or it may be constructed for a poor man and in fact be a permanent house for the family, the good house to come being more an aspiration than an early reality. The marks of a permanent house are construction with beams, instead of poles, good siding, a good roof, now mostly of tile, a design based on mat size, and a cemented kitchen. Housebuilding ceremonies and celebrations apply only to the permanent house.

[84] Ceremonies or observances during stages in the building of a house
342 differ from place to place and among people in the same village. In
782 Matsuda before the house is started, the owner, his friends, and neighbors gather and offer a prayer that the house be a good and a happy one. Before construction, and once each year following completion, rice cakes (mochi in Japanese) and sake are placed in each of the four corners [262] of the house site. Three rice cakes are put on the smallest of three [203] saucers which fit into one another. Two of these saucer sets with the [415] rice cakes, together with a sake bottle and a small cup are placed on a tray. The east, north, west, and south corners are visited in that order. Sake is poured from the flask to a small cup. There is a short prayer. A piece of white paper, attached to a stick of dwarf bamboo (Yambaru take) about one foot long is burned. The sake is poured over the embers. The top rice cake is placed on the corner; the other two [825] remain on the small plate. Prayers are offered for protection against the deadly snake (habu). The rice cake is then picked up. On the next corner, the ceremony is repeated.

When the ridge pole is put up, the carpenter prays that there will [183] be no injuries. Observances at the raising of the roof (muneage in [262] Okinawan) seem to be universal in the villages. Three parcels, one of salt, one of bean paste, and one of charcoal are wrapped in a leaf—any will do—and these are tied with a string and suspended from the inner side of the crossbeam or from the ridge pole. There are no prayers at this time.

of the head of the extended Matsuda family. In the extended family reunions at this home, which is on the presumed original site of the first house, on New Years and on O-Bon, there are member families not only from Matsuda itself, but from villages in the Motobu peninsula, Nakagusuku, and the Nakijin areas. There are about 180 persons in the present extended family group of the Matsuda family, of whom about 80 attend the reunions. In these extended family reunions, the heads of the branch families who reside in other villages may send money--about 10Y--for charcoal sticks (senko in Japanese) and sake to be used in the observances. These meetings occur at New Years, on the birth of a child, at the celebration on the naming of a child, for the worship at the family tomb in the third month of the lunar year, and on O-Bon in the seventh month. Another practice in this family illustrates a variant in extended family customs. In the Matsuda family, the members of the main family, every seventh year, hold worship at the homes of branch families at Nakagusuku and Nakijin during the festival of the fifth lunar month. 614

The importance of the extended family, it would seem, varies somewhat with the families comprising the larger kinship group. While in the extended family, the ties are not so close as those of the immediate family, and even of friends and neighbors, these ties though sometimes tenuous are really a geographical network of relationships that provide the basis in fact for belonging and for being part of a wider community.

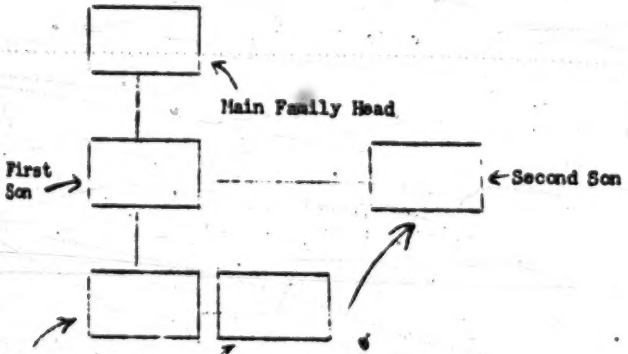
The force of this fact should not be underestimated. It is part of the personal security and of being a link in the chain that is so integral a characteristic of the family system. It is not unusual for a person to go to another village or to the larger towns and to have his relatives in the extended family receive him and take care of him for long or short periods. The head of the extended family and his custodianship of the family tomb, and his leadership in the reunions further cement these wider relationships. With some, it is true, extended family observances are perfunctory. A school teacher, for example, said that when his beliefs in religion and in the worship of ancestors were stronger, he visited the site of the main house quite often; now his visits were perhaps once or twice a year, and these were done as a matter of form. But still they were done, and the indirect effect, if not to deepen religious conviction, was to maintain personal ties with the wider kinship group. There is little doubt that the extended family reinforces and solidifies the family groups, especially when several branch families are located in the village of the seat of the main family, or with those, like the fishing community of Hinatogawa, whose family seat is in a common parent town. There does not seem, however, to be that strong sense of extended family loyalty that has been remarked upon so often in the traditional Chinese family system, especially among the gentry class. [574] [183]

In view of the importance of the first son to the immediate family, it might appear contradictory that a first son would be adopted out. The answer is, I think, that it is more important to secure succession to the main family than it is to the branch family. 597

Since adoptions are so few, it is not possible to say which of these two mechanisms is most frequently used or to make distinctions among villages. Hanashiro informants said that the commonest practice is to adopt the second son of a brother. In Minatogawa, the same situation held, with the added statement that if the brother had only one son, that son would not be adopted by the uncle.

In Matsuda, informants mentioned most frequently the first method, that is the adoption of the first son of the second son to succeed to the family line. In either case, the continuity of both the main and the branch families is provided for.

Adoption may also work in the reverse situation, that is when there is no male heir to the branch family. This would be solved by adopting the second, but never the first son of the brother in direct line of succession:



The adoptions of which we have been speaking are of minor children and independent of marriage arrangements for the daughters of the family. It is possible to adopt a daughter's prospective husband and thus to provide both an heir to the house and a husband for the daughter.

This awkward device is out of keeping with the family system. It places a man in the position of a woman and violates the basic assumption that sons carry on the family of the father. This type of adoption is [183]

597 known as groom-adoption (mukoyoshi in Japanese). No instances of this form of adoption were found in the villages. The husband-to-be is adopted into his wife's family and, at the same time, becomes successor to his wife's father's estate. The adopted man is placed in a similar position to a daughter to be married: he forsakes his own family, his name is taken off the family register of his father, and he becomes, like the bride in a normal situation, a member of his wife's family.

597 183 [171] Common in Japan, this device is considered a humiliating position, both in Japan and in Okinawa,* for the bridegroom, since he puts himself in an unfavorable position regarding the women of the adopting family and leaves his own. Even though unused, reactions to this form of adoption are unreservedly negative in the villages. "It is very distasteful," said one man. "The boy deserts his own home and enters his wife's home." Occasionally however it probably will be used. There are a few families with five or six daughters and no sons. In one instance, a family with six daughters, the eldest of marriageable age, the parents were considering groom adoption.

597 171 In Okinawa unlike Japan, the maintenance of the family system is not contingent upon an elaborate and widely used system of adoption. This is one of the important distinctions to be made between Okinawan and Japanese culture, for in Japan adoption has been used by the royal family, in business and professional circles, as well as among the ordinary classes of people.

7

The "Growing Up" Parent

597 608 855 934 There is also a special form of adoption in Okinawa. It is debatable whether it is directly concerned with the maintenance of the family system, or is a more general aspect of the culture and part of the care and rearing of children. This is known as yashineuya (in Okinawan), yashinaoya or morawako (in Japanese). It is not adoption, but an arrangement that is considered helpful for the survival of sickly children who, the parents feel, might not live to maturity. The verb, yashinsu in Japanese means to rear, adopt, or support. It is also used in referring to raising animals.

[791] [787] The first step is to consult a fortune teller (sanjinsō in Japanese). Hanashiro people can go to nearby Gushichan; Minatogawans to Itoman or Naha, and the parents of Matsuda to Ginoza or to Nago to consult the

* This situation has changed since the war. See The Japanese village in transition, as cited, 213.

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Part 1

Hinatogawa, the Fishing Community

1

Introduction

226 [596] 607

Fishing families are a closely knit group. They are usually interrelated. For the most part, the main houses of their extended families are in the fishing town of Itoman. Fathers, sons, wives, daughters, grandparents participate in some phase of fishing activity.

226 593

In an agricultural community, the first son remains in the home working the fields of his father. In fishing, through long custom, there is an avoidance of teamwork among close relatives. Members of the immediate family will not go out on the same fishing boat. A father will not take his son, an elder brother will not take a younger. Partners and working teams on boats are more distant relatives or friends. If a father and a son are on the same boat and it is lost, the present and the succeeding head both perish. To this incontrovertible possibility, there has been added the belief that if two persons of the same immediate family go to sea together on the same boat, there will be a disaster. And actual and near disasters are frequent enough to make both points of view understandable. The sons of fishermen, who are learning the ways of the fish and of the sea, go on the boats of others. Many younger fishermen regard the belief that it is inviting disaster to have two members of the same immediate family together on the same boat as a superstition (meishin), but to my knowledge, no fisherman ignores the custom. [183]

226 241 [923]

In Hinatogawa, about one half of the fishermen have fields of their own, usually small and poor. Perhaps twenty men in the village may be classed as half farmers and half fishermen, but even in these cases it is the wives and the children who have the continuing responsibility for the fields.

226 324 463

Neither is it rare for a fisherman to be a stonecutter. Perhaps another twenty men are engaged in the summer in fishing, and in stonecutting in the winter, or on unfavorable fishing days. The three main occupations of the village, including Nagamo, are thus found in varying combinations. Fishing is the most exacting and offers few opportunities for amateurs. Stonecutting requires strength and endurance. For those who have land, agriculture offers possibilities of growing one's own food and of avoiding cash outlays.

226 96 [132]

In an average summer month, there may be about 20 good fishing days. But because of unusual or unexpected rains or typhoons opportunities may be fewer. In 1951, there were only about ten working days in each of the summer months. In winter fishing days average about a week in a

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wood and lumber for Japanese army uses and for air raid shelters were in demand, (2) the burning in the course of the war, and (3) the intense cutting after the war for firewood and rebuilding.

Okinawan traditions relating to forest care have a positive value and it is worth while to recapitulate them here. Local old men and antiquarians in Matsuda give credit to Saion who wrote a long treatise on agriculture and is said to have intentionally devised superstitions to save trees. Death or misfortune would come to him who cut the trees, especially those in sacred groves or on the tops of mountains. Some local residents have said that the gods of the mountain are really not of religious inspiration at all, but had their origin in the conscious desire of Saion to save the trees. While there does not seem to be any truth in this assertion, since these deities of the sacred groves and mountain tops reach far back into antiquity, there is no doubt that sacred groves and houses of the mountain gods saved trees that otherwise would have been cut down. (In China and Japan, religious shrines and holy places have also been areas of the preservation of trees).

Present attitudes were summarized by a Matsuda school principal who said that beliefs in mountain gods and in death and misfortune following cutting trees were dying out, and that these old beliefs had been replaced by awareness of the scientific reasons for preserving the trees.

In Matsuda, pride in the trees, in the groves that line its hill tops and overlook the narrow valleys and ravines planted to rice and other crops is a conspicuous part of village experience. There are trees along the main road near the town that are said to have been planted in Saion's time under his inspiration.

These favorable traditions are helpful. They do not guarantee the preservation of the forests. Previous experience has shown this. From what may be surmised of the history of Okinawan forests, the destruction of modern times has been correlated with war and the expansion of economic activities. We may speculate, too, that previous deforestation was slow, inexorable and related to the clearing of accessible stands near settlements, and the extension of these settled areas as they grew. "Most of the accessible primitive forests have been exhausted," Dr. Green wrote in his report to Commodore Perry.11 The need for fuel increases with population. In China, Japan, Korea, and Okinawa, the relation of forests, either as a source for lumber or fuel, to population growth and settlement is a very intimate one. This is a basic consideration in discussing not only the "patterns of culture" but the relation of culture to the natural environment in this part of the world.

11 Hawks, Perry's expedition to Japan, Vol. II, 35

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away evil spirits (bakemono).[1] From the pig sty the child is then taken to the kitchen, where a pot of rice has been cooking. Soot from the outside of the pot is taken up with the middle finger of the right hand and a round black spot pressed on the forehead above the bridge of the nose between the eyebrows. The reason for this could not be ascertained.

Beliefs in the power of a pig sty to ward off evil spirits are still held in Minatogawa and the customs were generally practiced up to the beginning of the war. But these beliefs were related more to celebrations following the birth of the child than to the birth itself. The elements of these beliefs seemed to be that the afterworld was close to this world. If a child were not protected, the spirits of the afterworld would steal the child and take him back. The party celebrating the birth lasted a whole week, usually starting each evening about 8 and ending at 8 the following morning. Guests stayed up all night to prevent the child from being stolen, for if anyone went to sleep, the spirit would enter. Spirits followed behind the guest and were especially dangerous after 10 at night. The spirits however were frightened by the pigs; guests arriving during the danger hours went to the pig pen first to scare off the spirit following them, before entering the house. There was no evidence, in the parties I attended, of any present observance of this custom by young parents. The week of all night parties is no longer held.

These beliefs were found in Minatogawa. Hanashiro informants had heard of such customs, but were vague about them. While their seeming absence in Matsuda may be due to incomplete data, there may be another explanation. These beliefs may have been picked up by fishing people from other sources.

One other birth custom known as jiru belongs to the recent history of the island. Jiru, as explained in Chapter V, is a fire place sunk in the floor of an Okinawan house, often in the corner of the dining room which adjoins a hall or a sleeping room, and near the kitchen. Convalescence was called jiru because mother and child warmed themselves by the device. Today convalescence may be called jiru, though it has nothing to do with the old custom, which in the literature has been referred to as "roasting."

1 When I discussed this and the following beliefs relating to pigs with people in Matsuda, they ridiculed them and said there was no truth in it, implying that people in the south did not know what they were talking about. Subsequent rechecking convinced me that this was not so and that the beliefs in Minatogawa represent differences in the rural culture.

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4

O-Bon

The festival of O-Bon takes place on the 15th and 16th of the 7th lunar month (August 17-18, 1951), or from the 13th to the 16th, if preliminary preparations are included.[3] This very important holiday lacks the variety of themes which appear in the celebration of New Year. O-Bon is a festival to entice the spirits of the dead to their earthly home, and then, what is just as important, to induce them, after their visit, to return to the other world. O-Bon is an occasion for extended family reunions. 796 795 769

Generally on the 7th day of the month, about a week before O-Bon, the family or representatives of the family visit the tombs, take an offering of sake, and clean up around the tomb. At this time, the dead are asked to come back on O-Bon. This is the tanabata matsuri.[4]

On the evening of the 13th, two candles are placed within the compound entrance to guide the spirits back. This act of welcome is known as unke or omukaebi.

In Hanashiro, on the 15th there are prayers and offerings to the dead. Candles are then relit at the compound entrance and the spirits beseeched to return to the afterworld (ukui in Okinawan, okuribi in Japanese, meaning sending back). This may also be done on the 16th. Members gather at the home of the head of the house of the main family. The 16th is passed in rest and recreation. In Hinatogawa, observing the holiday may require a visit to Itoman. The Matsuda custom is like that of Hanashiro.

O-Bon is a colorful holiday. Lanterns are freely used. Whether the people believe that the spirits of the dead return is a question to which there is no easy answer. Many observe the formalities and the customs of O-Bon without believing that the spirits have actually returned. There is formal compliance, but in my opinion real belief is to be found mostly among women of middle age and older. [916] [183]

3 O-Bon has been variously translated as "The Lantern Festival," "Festival of the Dead," "All Souls Day," but I prefer here to retain the Japanese word, as these translations are only misleading approximations.

4 For an interesting discussion of the origin of tanabata in Japan, see Chamberlain, Things Japanese, 436-37. In Okinawa one occasionally hears this referred to as a "star festival."

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the war, the upper stratum of society consisted of Japanese plus a few highly placed Okinawans. With the departure of the Japanese, there was no well developed class structure among the Okinawans to succeed to the Japanese hierarchy. Today in these villages, there are inequalities in economic well-being, and certain individuals or groups have greater prestige than others. But these, I am convinced, are not to be traced to a class structure. Any division of the village into upper, middle, and lower classes would be artificial and would put a strain on the facts. Differences, where they appear, are the result of individual qualities, such as age, the possession of land or money, or personal character.

In the old Loochooan kingdom, there was a rigid class stratification based on the Chinese model. The Japanese abolished the Loochoo nobility after the islands became a province, but, according to Furness (1899), "the people still cling to the old customs."[1] Despite the abolition of the nobility, distinctions between noble and commoner were made up to the recent war. In the family registers, descendants of the Loochooan nobility (shizoku) were so designated. But all villagers agreed that these distinctions had no meaning or value, either for preferment in the Japanese service, or for one's social standing among his countrymen. For all practical purposes, everyone was a commoner. Since the war, the fact that one is a descendant of the Okinawan nobility is, if possible, even more inconsequential. No notation is made in the family register. Most men over 35 can tell instantly whether a given surname is of noble or common origin.

The number of these descendants of nobles must be very great. Chamberlain in 1895 reproduced a table, which he said he had every reason to believe was accurate, showing an absurdly high proportion of nobles to commoners. These statistics were from the census of 1891 and for the entire Ryukyus:[2]

	Household Heads	Families
Princes	2	35
Nobility and Gentry	22,567	95,082
Common People	57,981	235,213
Total	80,550	330,330

1 Life in the Luchu islands, as cited, 7. For rank distinctions based on caps, stockings, sashes, and hair pins, see Simon, as cited, 155, 156-59. Hawk's Perry's expedition, as cited, Vol. I, 224, Vol. II, 48. Basil Hall also gives rank orders in an appendix. Perry considered government by this nobility very oppressive. The CA Handbook Ryukyu (Loochoo) Islands gives the historical background of the class structure and its manifestations in government.

2 In the article cited from the Geo. jour. 5 (1895), 298.

Buddhism, as an organized religion, is of no importance, even though most villagers say they are Buddhists. Buddhist symbols and practices inspired by Buddhism remain, but that is a different matter. The universal use of the Buddhist god shelf or household altar, the observance of Buddhist holidays, such as higan, are matters more of custom and tradition than of religious fervor. This is significant because the Okinawans, for almost 70 years, were a part of the Japanese homeland, the greatest Buddhist nation on earth. During my stay in Okinawa, I thought that the recent war had caused the decline in Buddhist influence. This is only partly true. Subsequent reading of the older literature made it clear that in modern times, Buddhism has not been a living force. The ethical and political systems were primarily Confucian. The priestesses had a greater influence on daily life and at death ceremonials, at least in rural Okinawa.

A variety of practices concerned with the worship of natural phenomena, such as the summits of mountains, groves of trees, wells and springs and the sea survive, but they are not strong.

There is little evidence of Shinto beliefs, except in a few families who were long resident in Japan. Shrine Shinto, closely tied in with emperor worship, has been abolished.

Villagers are acquainted with Christianity, but I encountered no adherents. The name of the 19th century missionary, Dr. Bettelheim, is still remembered by people in Hinatogawa and Hanashiro. Dr. Bettelheim, a Jewish convert to Christianity, came to Okinawa in 1846. He was both ineffective and unhappy, but his ineffectiveness was probably due more to the lack of enthusiasm of the Okinawan rulers than to personal inadequacy.

3

Buddhism

Buddhist formalisms and home observances exist in all the villages. But the religion is not practiced. The people do not attend services or temples, nor do they support or seek out priests. This present situation is apparently little changed from the recent past. Captain Basil Hall (1816) mentioned the apparent low status of the bonse. Charles Wahs, on Perry's staff, said that, "The people, however, appear to be indifferent to it, and do not seem to have much veneration for it. Basil Hall Chamberlain wrote in 1893 that Buddhist influence was almost extinct. In 1910, Simon spoke of the weakness of Buddhism and that priests often did not participate in funerals. Goldschmidt in 1927 made similar observations.[1]

1 Hall, as cited, 98-99; Hawks, Perry's expedition to Japan, II, 49. Chamberlain, On the manners and customs of the Loochooans, In: Trans. of the Asiatic society of Japan, 21 (1893), 274. Simon, Beitrage zur Kenntnis der Riukiu-Inseln, 103-04, 177. Goldschmidt, Neu-Japan, 145.

The only Buddhist priest in the areas studied was at the small village of Maegawa, within walking distance of Hinatogawa and Hanashiro. He was a priest of the Jōdo sect (Jōdoshu), one of the important sects of Japan, and stressing salvation by faith. The sect of the priest in this village is of no importance, since the rural people now or before the war had neither the interest nor the capacity for doctrinal distinctions. The temples of this sect were burned during the war, including one in the village of Kochinda, a junction point between Maha and Gushichan.

Before the war the colors of the robes varied with the sect and with the position of the priest in the hierarchy. In the Jōdo sect, the lowest grade wore black, followed up the scale by orange, blue or green, a chocolate reddish brown, and purple, the highest. This contrasts sharply with the priest's present improvisations. His is the black robe of the Shinshu sect. It is a summer garment, made of soft light silk called shiya and resembles a man's kimono, but is longer and sweeps the floor. The garment hangs straight down and is not gathered or tucked. The only other religious possessions were a bell and a badly soiled print of the Buddha (oshaku) which hung in his room.

Before the war, some people in the Gushichan area requested the services of a priest at funerals. After the war, the people of Hanashiro, and other villages as well, decided because of the expense, to forego the services of a priest.

Occasionally this priest officiates when the bones in the temporary tombs of Hinatogawa are moved to the extended family tomb at Itoman, or in a ceremony honoring a death anniversary. Few Okinawans became priests. This priest is a native of Japan, one of the few remaining Japanese priests in the island. At eleven, he entered a Buddhist temple (tera) and has been engaged in religious activity ever since. Now about 50, he has a wife and two children; his head is unshaved and the hair is of a conventional cut. He does not depend on the priesthood for a living, but is employed as an official in a village office.

The situation with regard to Buddhism was quite similar in Matsuda, although there is no priest in the vicinity. There is little doubt, if the villages studied are typical, that this already moribund religion is disappearing altogether here, choked off by lack of temples, lack of priests, and by indifference.

It is not so with household Buddhism, if this term may be used to describe ceremonies and beliefs centering around the Buddhist god shelf or family altar (butsudan). This household altar is in the second room of every home. Around it collect the sentimental memories of the past, such as family pictures, photographs of young soldiers and dearly loved relatives. Prayers and offerings of food and drink to the dead are made before it.

An important part of the Buddhist altar is a frame holding the memorial tablets for the family dead. These tablets (ihai) are pieces

Others include levies upon organizations and families to support the athletic meets, or 'undōkwai', which are such a popular part of life in Okinawa.

Before the war the women's group ('fujinkai') and the young people's group ('seinendan') levied a certain amount of soybeans against each member, and when they were delivered the sale brought in money to finance their activities. These organizations also made up special meals for local athletic favorites while they were in training, and provided a feast for them at the end of the contests. Today the 'undōkwai' is on more of a monetary basis, and there is a levy called the 'undōkwai no keihi'. In October of 1953, the cost of the grand athletic meeting held in Naha was divided among the 'son' according to the number of champions sent to the contest. Kochinda-son was top grade in Shimajiri, and Tomoyose was a middle-grade village within Kochinda-son. This grade was judged by the amount of arable land, its yield, and the population. Within the village, households in turn are assessed by three grades, according to their income tax records. These three grades were "minimum," under ¥20; "middle", ¥20-50; and "maximum", ¥50-54.

Local Philanthropy From time to time the leading household heads are called upon to donate money for improvement of village facilities. Names of contributors and amounts given are written upon a wooden plaque and hung in the village meeting house. The building of this meeting house itself involved the gathering of such a fund, to which Nanahan people gave a total of ¥1,450. Later a request for funds to buy a funeral stretcher brought ¥350 from the household heads, and a road repair campaign netted ¥1,550 from Nanahan.

Somewhat the reverse of the above occurred after the Russo-Japanese war when a particularly handsome soldier from the neighboring village came back from the front. All the leading 'geisha' in Naha had long had the habit of asking him to come to their establishments without charge. His return brought such joy to their hearts that they got together a sum of money and bought him a large plot of land near Nanahan.

Prizes at Contests From the time a youngster enters school and participates in his first contest to the time when he shows an animal at his last village or 'son' festival before retiring, all winners look forward to some sort of prize to mark the occasion. In school the prizes are generally beautifully handwritten scrolls, but as one gets older the prizes assume the form of wooden trays and articles of practical use in the home.

Sale of Children When the SIRI team first arrived on Okinawa and mentioned that we were interested in finding if the Okinawans still practiced the sale of children, sophisticated respondents feigned indignation. Later on, as we were able to gain rapport in the countryside, a number of such instances were forthcoming.

In Tomoyose a man got into debt over an effort to make a fortune in sugar along about 1910. He was so heavily in debt to village people that he was socially unable to live in the community, and moved to Itoman. There he sold his son to a fisherman. The son is now a grown man with an Okinawan wife and a mistress from Amami. His business is still fishing, although he also owns a truck.

CHAPTER V: FAMILY LIFE

W. P. Suttles

1. Kinship Organization

342 **The Household and the Family** Okinawan homes, both in the country and in the towns, show a surprising uniformity in struc-
• [183] ture, in floor plan, and even in orientation. This uniformity reflects the stability of society and at the same time reenforces it. The home of the
[361] Okinawan farmer usually faces south; indeed the older villages as a whole were established on southward-facing slopes.

The house consists of two main rooms separated by sliding doors, a long and narrow back room behind the two front rooms, and a kitchen to one side, usually the west. The measurements are usually in multiples of three feet (the Japanese foot being almost identical with the English foot); the two main rooms are usually the same size, 9 by 9 or 12 by 12 feet, and the others are somewhat smaller. The roofs of most houses are thatched with "kaya", but people who can afford it have wholly or partly tiled roofs. The roof of the kitchen may have a separate peak and ridgepole from that of the main part of the house. Usually the roof of the main part of the house extends beyond the front rooms so that there is a narrow veranda across the front and halfway around the side opposite the kitchen. The house usually has no windows. The kitchen has an outside door and the front rooms have sliding doors all the way around under the veranda; these are usually open except at night or during bad weather.

The main part of the house has a floor of boards but the kitchen often has only an earth floor or else consists of two sections, one floored and one not. The kitchen is thus usually lower than the main part of the house and is referred to as "below" while the main part is "above", but this also implies a difference in status. The room farthest from the kitchen is called the "first room" and the middle room is the "second room". The back room may be
333 a single long room or may be divided into two. At the back of the kitchen is
[354] the oven, usually made of earth or bricks with two or three holes for pots and pans to fit into. At the back of the second room, if the house is a "main house"---that of an eldest son, is the tootoomee (J. 'butsudan'), a cabinet for the ancestral tablets. At the back of the first room there is often an alcove containing a scroll and perhaps a family treasure; this is the utuku (J. 'tokonoma').

In the homes of more prosperous families the floors of the front rooms are permanently covered with "tatami", the thick mats used by the Japanese, but in most homes the only mats are the thinner mushiru, which are spread out
352 only when needed. Furniture is simple; the mushiru are the equivalent of chairs
[354] and beds; a low table may be brought out to put food upon at meal-time and a pot of burning charcoal may be brought out in cold weather for a little heat. Usually one sees only a basket of teacups and a tobacco-box. On formal occa-
592 sions the men sit in the first room and the women in the second, but usually
562 the partition is removed and the family simply lives in the whole space.

829 considered the initiator of all action. Frequently there are complaints of high taxes, criticisms of certain policies, and dissatisfaction with certain officials, but the authority of a government to undertake any course it chooses would never be challenged. There does not exist any concept of a limit to obedience or to the powers of government.

7. Social Control

626 621 The mechanisms of social control within an Okinawan village are not easily observed or studied since they are so rarely overt. One is impressed from the outset by the homogeneous character of the community, a natural outcome of the common experience and cultural heritage which all the members have shared. The average villager has had a limited range of contacts during the course of his or her lifetime, imposed to no small degree by the all-consuming demands of subsistence agriculture. Minorities within [183] the community rarely exist, and where they do, they are not recognized as such, for this homegeneity, in addition to being an actuality, is insisted upon as a cultural ideal. Consequently great stress is placed on presenting a united front to the outside. Within the community aggressive behavior is not tolerated and so great is the fear of rift through discord that few official acts are initiated without first securing informal concordance; consequently, formal political meetings are most often marked by unanimity and agreement. In enlisting the support of the villagers for a given project or proposed line of action leaders most frequently appeal to group solidarity, stressing the values of cooperation.

As is so often found in small communities where all the members have a face-to-face relationship, the chief mechanisms of social sanction are ridicule, censure, and the threat of ostracism. The small size and homogeneous nature of the Okinawan village limits the individual's behavior to a rather narrow and inflexible standard. The individual, however, must consider his actions not only in terms of the reactions of others to him [672] but also in terms of the consequences for his family. Under the old king- [178] dom the family was legally responsible for the actions of its members, and at the present time an individual is officially registered as a member of a certain family and is always thought of by the villagers in association 626 with that family. One's mistakes as well as one's achievements reflect upon 621 the other members of the family and are shared by them. This emphasis on 181 family and community over the individual serves markedly to curb individualism and to further the homogeneity of the society. Conformity and honoring one's obligations are the major cultural values. The surrogate for this strong cultural deemphasis of the individual is provided by a close ego identity with the family and community and by the security which they offer in return. The severest sanction which can be applied is expulsion of the individual from his group.

8. Local Autonomy

642 621 On a small island with a highly centralized government there is little room for local autonomy. Most action is initiated in the higher echelons of government and is unquestioningly obeyed at the lower levels. There